

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 NEA-11 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 OMB-01 NIC-01

DRC-01 SSO-00 /137 W

----- 037011

R 211612Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4275

INFO USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

NISRA KEFLAVIK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MARR IC NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION ISSUE: CABINET TO DISCUSS TERMINATION
PROPOSAL

REF: REYKJAVIK 103

1. INDEPENDENCE PARTY NEWSPAPER MORGUNBLADID REPORTS JAN 19 THAT AT MEETING OF GOI CABINET LAST WEEK, PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE MINISTERS PRODUCED RESOLUTION WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED BY PA ALTHING MEMBERS AND PARTY BOARD OF DIRECTORS DEMANDING THAT GOVT REQUEST FROM ALTHING POWER TO TERMINATE US-GOI DEFENSE AGREEMENT. PRIMIN JOHANNESSON REFUSED TO ALLOW DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION (PRESUMABLY ON GROUNDS THAT OTHER PARTIES IN COALITION HAD NOT YET FORMULATED POSITIONS ON ISSUE) BUT IS ALLEGED TO HAVE AGREED THAT DISCUSSION COULD TAKE PLACE AT CABINET MEETING JAN 22.

2. MORGUNBLADID ALSO ALLEGES THAT PROGRESSIVE PARTY COMMITTEE DEBATING DEFENSE ISSUE HAD ARRIVED AT PROPOSAL FOR REDUCTION OF
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IDF TO 1300 MEN OVER NEXT THREE YEARS AND PROGRESSIVES WERE

OPTIMISTIC THIS PLAN WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY PA EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD HAVE MEANT BASIC CHANGE IN PA STAND THAT NO FOREIGN TROOPS SHOULD REMAIN IN ICELAND. PAPER NOW CLAIMS PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTION WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DEMAND FROM PA MINISTERS THAT RESOLUTION MUST BE ACCEPTED IF COALITION WERE TO CONTINUE.

3. COMMENT: IT WAS PROBABLY TO BE EXPECTED THAT PA WOULD FIND IT NECESSARY FOR INTERNAL PARTY PURPOSES TO PUT FORWARD DEMAND FOR TERMINATION AUTHORITY WHETHER OR NOT ITS POSITION IS AS INFLEXIBLE AS IT CLAIMS. PRIMIN'S POSITION IS DIFFICULT ONE, HOWEVER, BECAUSE PETITION CAMPAIGN FOR RETENTION OF DEFENSE AGREEMENT (REFTEL) SEEMS (ACCORDING TO ITS SPONSORS) ON WAY TO SURPRISING SUCCESS. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE EXTENT OF THAT SUCCESS, SPONSORS ARE AIMING AT MINIMUM OF 20,000 SIGNATURES. CONSIDERING THAT IMPORTANT SEGMENT OF THAT RESPONSE SEEMS TO BE IN PRIMIN'S OWN PROGRESSIVE PARTY, HE CANNOT DISREGARD IMPACT. MEASURE OF THAT SUCCESS MAY BE JUDGED BY VITUPERATION ON CAMPAIGN AND ITS SPONSORS POURED OUT BY PA MEDIA IN TERMS NORMALLY NOT USED IN NORDIC PRESS OR POLITICAL LIFE. IRVING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, PRESS COMMENTS, COLLECTIVE SECURITY AGREEMENTS, MILITARY BASES, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS, MILITARY AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974REYKJA00135
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740127/aaaaazpr.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: REYKJAVIK 103
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <29 MAY 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IDF RETENTION ISSUE: CABINET TO DISCUSS TERMINATION PROPOSAL
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, IC, US, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005